

struggling Soviet economy. So we're in a critical time here in terms of meetings, in terms of G-7 or summit. And I'm anxious to hear from Mr. Primakov, who is Gorbachev's special emissary. Just as he was anxious to hear from our agricultural specialists that went over there, come up with some good ideas. And this is the way you do it. You talk to each other and you keep going. And it's true for U.S.-Soviet, it's true for G-7, and it's true for the Middle East.

Thank you all very much.

Note: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. at the North Portico of the White House. The President referred to Nicholas E. Calio, Dep-

uty Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs (House); Frederick D. McClure, Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs; U.S. Trade Representative Carla A. Hills; Representatives Dan Rostenkowski and Richard A. Gephardt; Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; Marlin Fitzwater, Press Secretary to the President; Yevgeniy Primakov, Soviet Presidential Council member and envoy for Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev; Supreme Court Associate Justice David Souter; Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of Israel; and Secretary of State James A. Baker III.

Statement on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee's Action Approving the Administration's National Energy Strategy

May 23, 1991

I am pleased to congratulate Chairman Bennett Johnston, Senator Malcolm Wallop and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on the energy bill they approved today. The 17-3 vote by the committee demonstrates a genuine bipartisan commitment to balanced, realistic, and comprehensive energy legislation.

When I announced my National Energy

Strategy (NES) on February 20, I challenged the Congress to do its part to pass the legislation recommended in the NES. The committee's action today, taken on a bipartisan basis, marks a very constructive first step in this process.

The committee's action helps move America toward a more secure, cleaner, and more efficient energy future.

Exchange With Reporters on the Assassination of Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of India

May 24, 1991

The President. Well, may I pay my respects to all the Embassy staff, too, and thank you very much for coming out to pay honor to this—we feel this very strongly, your loss.

Q. Mr. President, how confident are you that Indian democracy will pass through this crisis?

The President. India's democracy is strong, steadfast, and it has the full support

of our country. It always has, and it always will. And this is a terrible tragedy. It tests the souls of India, and it tries the hearts of all of us. But I fear not for India's democracy.

Q. Mr. President, are you worried about——

The President. I really must go on.

Q. Are you worried about the sectarian violence and really just wanted to——